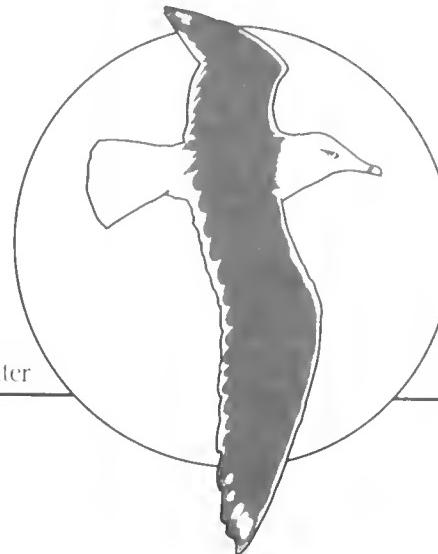


The Gull



Golden Gate Audubon Society Newsletter

Volume 79, No. 8 September 1997

Coastal Clean Up

Now's your chance to use your best pick up moves at the beach! With dozens of drink cans, hundreds of plastic bits, and an incredible amount of cigarette butts, Ocean Beach (San Francisco's welcome mat to the Pacific Ocean) finds many people doing more than just wiping their feet. They also tend to leave behind what they no longer need, a.k.a. trash. This trash translates into pollution and environmental hazards if nothing is done. Luckily there are concerned people like the members of Golden Gate Audubon Society and special days like Coastal Clean Up Day this September 20th.

As a prime birding area, Ocean Beach has played a big role in GGAS's history, especially lately concerning the conflict between the Western Snowy Plover and off-leash dogs. To show our appreciation, GGAS is forming a team to lend a helping hand this clean up day. With garbage bags and gloves being provided by the California Coastal Commission, all we need is you! And since we'll be there, why not get in some bird watching? GGAS's team leader John Gibbons will

also be leading a field trip along the beach after the clean up, so bring along your binoculars and field guides. It's a good chance to get to know your shorebird neighbors, and hopefully we'll see a Western Snowy Plover or two.

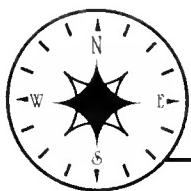
We will meet at Ocean Beach at the end of Kirkham Street at 8:30 to organize and begin. Dress with cold damp wind in mind, and remember, chances are you will get sand in your shoes. To join in, please give John a call at (415) 621-3899.

See you there!



Seed Sale Day

Our next birdseed sale pick-up will take place on October 3 and 4, 1997. If you wish to order seed, please fill out the seed-order form on page 7 and mail it to us with a check made out to GGAS, with a self-addressed stamped envelope. Orders should be received in the GGAS office by Thursday, September 24. Pick-up of seed will take place Friday, October 3, 3 - 6 pm and Saturday, October 4, 9 am - 12 noon at the Golden Gate Audubon Office in Berkeley.



Field Trips Calendar

GAS field trips are conducted by experienced birders who wish to share their knowledge and love of birds with others. All trips are free of charge (except for entrance fees that may be charged by regional, state, or national parks) and are open to everyone, regardless of membership in the National Audubon Society or Golden Gate chapter.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 1 (LABOR DAY) COASTAL SAN FRANCISCO – EARLY FALL MIGRANTS

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the parking lot on Merrie Way (a stub street off the north end of Great Highway) above the Cliff House. The trip will end at noon. Be prepared for cool weather. (See July Gull for trip details.) Leader: Harry Fuller (415) 668-8229.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 COASTAL SAN FRANCISCO

Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot between South and Middle Lakes (Chain of Lakes) near the 41st Avenue and Lincoln Way entrance to Golden Gate Park. We will bird in the park, at Lake Merced, and in Golden Gate National Recreation Area in search of warblers, flycatchers and vagrants. Bring lunch and be prepared for cold weather near the coast. Leader: Dan Murphy (415) 564-0074.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 MINI-TRIP TO ALAMEDA SOUTH SHORE AND SURROUNDING AREAS

Meet at 9 a.m. in Alameda at Broadway and Shoreline Drive. We will be looking for shorebirds and waterfowl. This trip often produces Clapper Rail and a dozen or more species of shorebirds. Bring lunch and a scope if you have one. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510)-351-9301 and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 COYOTE HILLS REGIONAL PARK

Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the last parking lot for this half-day trip. From the East Bay, take I-880 south to Rt. 84/Dumbarton Bridge exit. Turn right and continue west. Exit at Paseo Padre Pkwy. Turn right and continue north one mile to Patterson Ranch Road and follow signs to Coyote Hills. (See July Gull for trip details.) Beginners welcome. Co-leaders: Rusty Scalf (510) 595-8319 and Bob Lewis (510) 845-5001. \$ (*)

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 REDWOODS REGIONAL PARK

Meet at 8 a.m., Redwood Road entrance, in the last parking lot for this half-day trip. We hope to see woodpeckers, Brown Creepers, Purple Finches and perhaps some migrants. Take the Warren Freeway (Hwy. 13), exit onto Redwood Road, and proceed east about 3 miles to the park entrance. Leader: Rusty Scalf (510) 595-8319. \$(*)

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17 GOLDEN GATE PARK, COASTAL SAN FRANCISCO

A sure cure for those midweek blues, we will begin at Middle Lake in Golden Gate Park and bird this area and the North Lake in search of fall migrants and vagrants. This will be the height of fall migration so anything will be possible. Our success or lack thereof at this location will determine where we go from there. We will finish between 11 a.m. and noon so that everyone can head to work hopefully feeling refreshed and happy. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Middle Lake parking lot in Golden Gate Park. Leader: Hugh Cotter (415) 752-6776.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 COASTAL CLEAN-UP/SNOWY PLOVERS, OCEAN BEACH

(See Announcement in this issue of *The Gull*).

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 HAYWARD SHORELINE

Hayward Shoreline Interpretive Center Staff Naturalist Cam Wolff will discuss the history and ecology of the Hayward Shoreline and the work of the Interpretive Center as she leads this half-day trip which will focus on shorebirds. This trip is suitable for birders of all ages and skills. Meet at 8 a.m. at the Interpretive Center, 4901 Breakwater Ave. Directions from Oakland: take I-880 south to Hwy. 92 (Hayward/San Mateo Bridge exit), go west towards San Mateo. Exit Hwy. 92 at Clawitter Avenue. At the stop sign, cross Clawitter

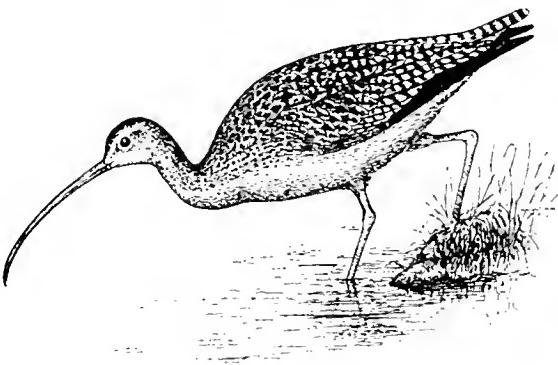
onto Breakwater Ct., then take the first left turn onto Breakwater Avenue. The Center is at the end of the road. Leader: Cam Wolff (510) 881-6751, daytime.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE

Meet at 8 a.m. at the Bovine Bakery on Rte. 1 in downtown Pt. Reyes Station, two miles north of Olema. We will concentrate on shorebird identification at Abbott's Lagoon. Bring a scope if you have one, lunch and liquids, and wear comfortable walking shoes. Heavy rain cancels. (If in doubt, call.) Leader: Lina Jane Prairie (510) 235-2902.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4 SAN MATEO COAST

Meet at 9 a.m. in the parking lot of San Gregorio State Beach (near the junction of Highways 1 and 84). We will bird at Pescadero in the morning and Ano Nuevo in the afternoon. We will look for migrants and shorebirds in the mudflats, including Pectoral and Baird's Sandpipers, tattlers and knots. We may also see Marbled Murrelets at Ano Nuevo. Bring lunch and liquids and be prepared for cool weather. Heavy rain cancels. Leader: Alan Hopkins (415) 664-0983. (\$)*



Field Trip Reports: Hayward Shoreline Is Truly Special In June

Welcome to the Nursery! Barn Swallows were feeding their young, while teenagers tried out their wings, landing clumsily in the pathway. A female Black-necked Stilt showed off her two large, speckled eggs, while her neighbor tried to keep track of its downy young. Across the path, an American Avocet demonstrated the species' typical sweep-feeding motion to a chick more interested in probing for goodies, maybe due to its relatively short, straight bill.

Further out, as Cliff Swallows buzzed overhead, we stopped to scope for Skimmers. Yes! Among dozens of nesting Forster's Terns, the large Black Skimmer showed off its giant red bill. Returning from the green bridge, an unfamiliar call overhead heralded a gray-breasted, long-tailed Arctic Tern. Wow! What a great day for 20 GGAS members at Hayward Shoreline. *Bob Lewis, June 7, 1997*

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5 TRYBING ARBORETUM

(See Announcement in this issue of The GULL.) Meet at 8 a.m. at the front gate of the Arboretum (9th Ave. and Lincoln Way) for this half-day trip. Beginners and all others welcome. Leader: Allan Ridley (415) 566-3241.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8 EAST BAY SHORELINE

Meet at 9:15 a.m. at the large dirt parking lot next to the Seabreeze Market at the intersection of Interstate 80 and University in Berkeley. Take Interstate 80 to the University exit and go west towards the marina. We will bird the nearby mudflats for shorebirds, then probably caravan to Point Isabel and other shoreline spots. Lunch optional. Heavy rain cancels. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301 and Jean-Marie Spoelman

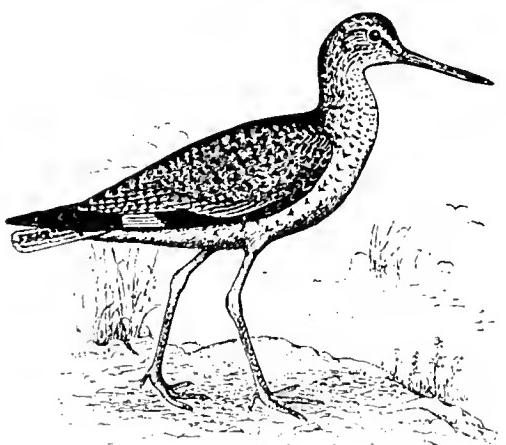
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11 SNOWY PLOVERS AT OCEAN BEACH

Meet at the Cliff House at 9 a.m. After checking Seal Rock we will walk along Ocean Beach and watch for Snowy Plovers and other shorebirds. We will also look for Loons, Shearwaters, Terns, Jeagers, and other birds of the ocean. Pack a lunch and wear shoes appropriate for walking along the ocean's edge. The round trip will be about five miles, but it is easy to return to the Cliff House by way of the #18 bus for those who would like a shorter walk. Leader: Alan Hopkins. (415) 664-0985.

Trips marked with a (\$) go to parks or other sites which require an entrance fee. Carpooling arrangements will be attempted for trips marked with a (*). See below. Problems, etc.: If you need a ride or can take a passenger, if you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, if you have suggestions for trips, or if you are interested in leading a trip, call Lillian Fujii (510) 236-4167, Field Trips Committee Chair.



Where have some of my favorite birds gone? Like raccoons and coyotes, some bird species thrive and prosper in the crush of civilization. Other birds are so particular as to their habitat needs or their dietary preferences that they seem to be dwindling in numbers. I rarely see a Meadowlark. We had them in our first neighborhood 35 years ago in an empty lot across the street.



Now I strain to spot one on our drive past fields en route to Bodega Bay. We all know the impact of the dreaded Starlings on both bluebird and Acorn Woodpecker populations as these non-native birds snag the few remaining nesting sites in dead trees. When we first moved to Orinda 30 years ago, our neighborhood was rife with Lombardy poplars which were very popular with Northern Orioles. Now the trees have reached their life spans and it's rare to see the orioles. I hope they've found other places to nest. However, drive through urban or suburban neighborhoods and there is no shortage of

Rock Doves (or plain old pigeons), English Sparrows (another import), crows, Brewer's Blackbirds and gulls. Even jays, mockingbirds and Turkey Vultures thrive. The once-endangered Peregrine Falcon is adapting to a lack of nesting sites on rocky cliffs by making itself at home on skyscraper and bridge ledges. Barn and Cliff Swallows appreciate our architecture for its cozy spots under the eaves to situate mud nests. There are always seasonal fluctuations of bird populations. And the California Thrasher, e.g., is unusually vocal when courting but practically mute during nesting, so who knows how many there are? I know we rarely see or hear one when we need one for our Christmas bird count, which is as valuable as a tool to track a particular species over the years.

Certain bird species are naturally shy and wary. I've often wondered if the ground-nesting species are particularly nervous because of their obvious vulnerability. Think of the quail and thrashers. Other back yard favorites (the Chestnut-backed Chickadee comes to mind) almost land on my head when re-filling their feeders, while the titmouse and the White-breasted Nuthatch are more nervous and quick to flit away. The most common feeder birds, the Dark-eyed Juncoes, are very calm birds, as are Golden-crowned Sparrows. I don't know why.

Rattling around in the brush pile below the deck I was expecting to see the trio of deer who

rest there. Instead four "teen-aged" Spotted Towhees (formerly called Rufous-sided Towhees) were playing tag. They practiced intricate flight maneuvers in and around the brush while Dad sat nearby scolding the other bird watcher in this house, Toot the cat. The youngsters had better heed the more experienced parent bird because cats are one of the reasons song bird populations are dropping. (If I had known this I would have insisted my cat be an indoor cat – too late now, however, so I bell him.) These young towhees are a pretty scruffy looking group, dull brownish but with the distinctive red eyes and white spots of their tails' flash pattern. Hard to believe they will one day look as crisply-attired as Dad.

Western Bluebirds are being assisted in their competition with starlings by the increase in numbers of nesting boxes being put up in the open areas they prefer. We were thrilled this season to have "our" bluebirds successfully rear two broods at Bodega Bay in the box my husband Dick built. I never tire of feasting my eyes on the male's startling cobalt blue or on their graceful but exuberant flight or their hovering while searching for insects or worms.

I hope that I'm just not spotting some species and that they really are here after all. We know the days of skies blackened by huge numbers of migrating birds are gone. But what about our back yards? What do you think?



Going Once, Going Twice, . . .

Although it may be hard to spot on the beach at times, one way to assure a good Snowy Plover sighting is to have one framed on your wall!

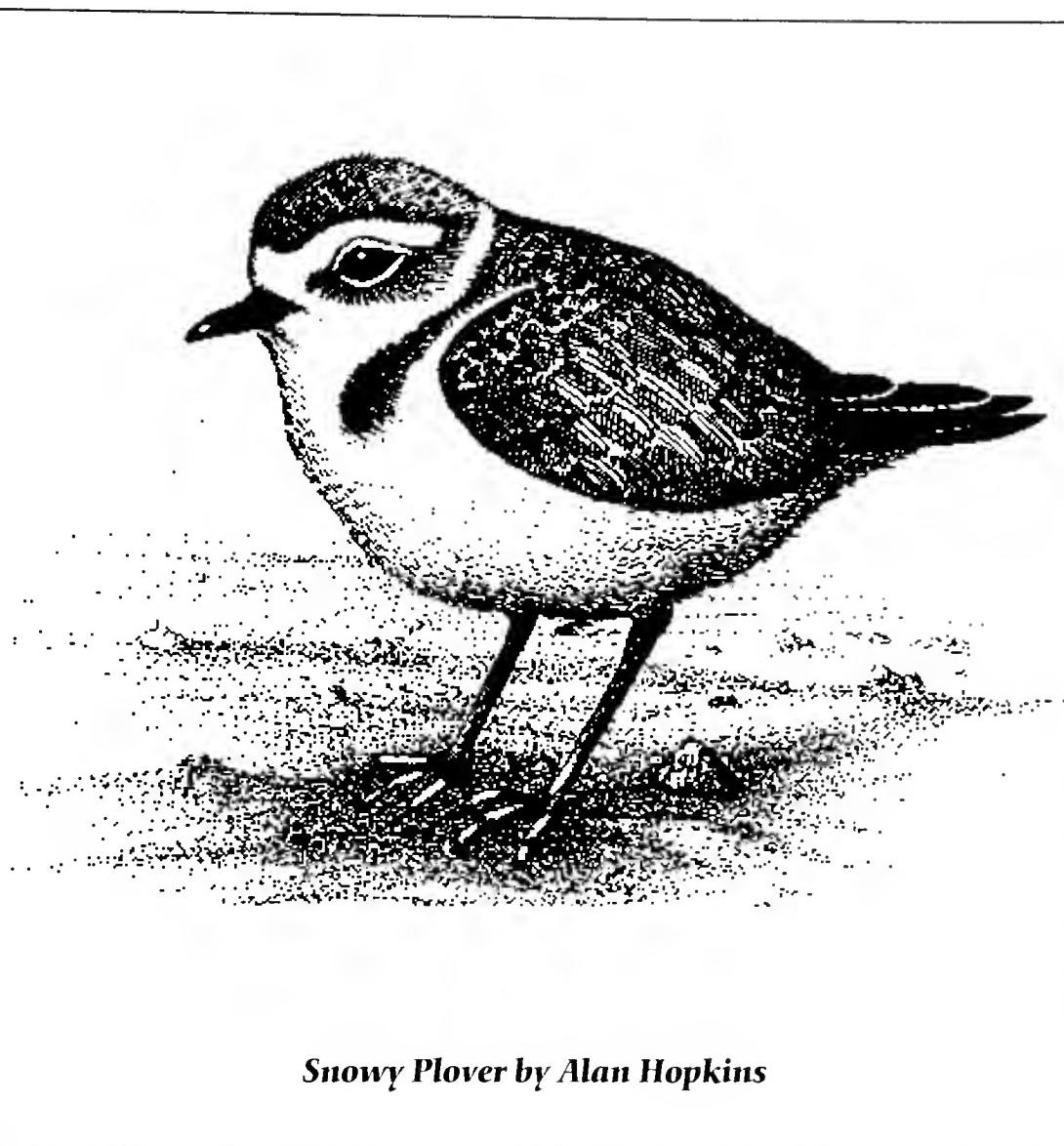
Created by Alan Hopkins as the symbol for 1997's Birdathon, his pen and ink drawing has appeared in the GULL several times and adorns the front of this year's Birdathon T-shirts. Alan has now generously offered the original to GGAS who in turn has decided to offer it to one of its members through a "call-in auction". Starting at \$200.00, bids will be accepted through the GGAS office until October 15.

Not only is this a great gift idea for a fellow bird lover during the up-coming holidays or a chance to own the beautiful original yourself, it's also a great way to support GGAS. The funds gathered from the auction will go directly to the chapter's education and conservation efforts. To place your bid simply call the office at (510) 843-2222.



Bequests

The Golden Gate Audubon Society greatly regrets the passing of one of our long-time members, Elina Holst. A good friend to us all, we are extremely grateful that she thought of us in her will, leaving the Golden Gate Audubon Society a significant bequest. Thank you very much Elina.



Snowy Plover by Alan Hopkins

Birding with Children

Join Stephanie Quick on Sunday September 28th at the Berkeley Marina for a short bird trip specifically for children and families. Meet at the sundial in front of the Berkeley Pier at 10:00 a.m.. Stephanie will point out the common bird species we see in the bay, as well as discuss basic bird behavior and natural history. Families with children of any age should feel free to attend. For further information or directions, contact Louise Harm at (510) 845-2482.





High-Sea Adventures

Golden Gate Audubon Society and Shearwater Journeys are teaming up to offer GGAS members a pelagic trip to the Monterey Seavalley, Sunday, October 12. The waters off of Monterey offer some of the best seabird watching in North America, and Shearwater Journeys runs the best trips in Monterey. We will look for: Sooty, Pink-footed, Buller's, Black-vented, and Short-tailed shearwaters, Black, Ashy, and

possibly Wilson's storm-petrels. Mammal sightings in the past have included Humpback, Blue and Baird's beaked whales, Common, White-sided and Northern Right-whale dolphins, Dall's and Harbor porpoise. In October the ocean is full of wildlife, but you must be on a boat to see it! Fortunately GGAS members receive a reduced rate of \$52.00 (non-refundable).

We'll meet at Sam's Fishing Shop on Monterey's Fisherman's Wharf at 7:00 a.m., the boat

departs at 7:30. Please be on time! Bring food and clothing appropriate for a cool and possibly splashy day.

For more information please call *only* Alan Hopkins at (415) 664-0983. To register, send a check, phone number and a *self-addressed stamped envelope* to:

Shearwater Journeys
P.O. Box 190
Hollister, CA 95024



Seed Sale

Birdseed sale pick-up on October 3 and October 4

Yes, it's time again. Autumn has arrived and our feathered winter residents are flying in looking for food. So it's time for us to stock up on birdseed.

Most of our native birds favor either sunflower or niger seeds. To honor their preferences, we are offering these seeds at a considerable discount from last year's prices.

Our next birdseed sale pick-up will be on October 3 and 4, 1997. If you wish to order seed, please fill out the adjacent form and mail it to us with a check made out to GGAS, with a self-addressed stamped envelope. Orders should be received in the GGAS office by Thursday, September 24. You will pick up your seed on either Friday, October 3, from 3-6 p.m., or on Saturday, October 4, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon At the GGAS office in Berkeley.

We will have plenty of extra seed on hand, so if you did not order enough seed, or forgot to order any seed at all, come down to the office. We'll have the seed you need!

Volkman seed is the best there is. It contains no waste seed and has been cleaned of debris and dust so that you get what you pay for. If you have a question about which seed to buy give us a call at the GGAS office at (510) 843-2222.

Where to put the seed? We have feeders too. The Duncraft Feeder is a 16" long tube seed feeder, and as always, we have a variety of humming bird feeders and a thistle seed feeder.

We are also offering black baseball caps with the GGAS logo for \$15, plus \$2 for shipping and handling if mailed to you. And finally, we have beautiful GGAS T-shirts for sale for a very reasonable \$10. They are imprinted with Alan Hopkins' wonderful drawing of a Western Snowy Plover.

Remember, your purchases provide an important source of income to GGAS, allowing us to continue our conservation, education, and field trip activities. We look forward to seeing you on seed sale day!

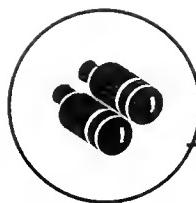
GGAS BIRD SEED AND FEEDER SALE

ORDER AND PREPAY BY SEPTEMBER 24, 1997

PICK UP FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4

NAME	
ADDRESS	
CITY	
TELEPHONE (DAY)	(EVENING)

SEED	QUANTITY	AMOUNT
GGAS' OWN MIX <i>Contains only red and white millet and black oil sunflower seed</i>	20 lbs. 50 lbs.	\$ 9.00 \$19.50
VOLKMAN PREMIUM	20 lbs.	\$ 8.50
WILD BIRD SEED <i>Composed of only red and white millet - no sunflower seeds (no squirrels)</i>	50 lbs.	\$18.50
BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED	25 lbs. 50 lbs.	\$15.00 \$25.00
BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER CHIPS <i>(No waste!)</i>	25 lbs.	\$24.00
NIGER (THISTLE) SEED	5 lbs.	\$8.00
FEEDERS		
DUNCRAFT SEED FEEDER 16"		\$28.00
THISTLE FEEDER		\$10.00
HUMMINGBIRD (window)		\$10.00
HUMMZINGER (saucer style)		\$15.50
HUMMINGBIRD (16 oz. bottle)		\$12.00
SUET CAGE (2" x 5" x 5")		\$ 5.50
SUET CAKE (11.75 oz.)		\$ 2.75
FEEDER POLE (sectional)		\$16.00
GGAS Hat		\$15.00
GGAS T-shirt		\$10.00
	SUB-TOTAL	
<i>Be sure to include your check with a stamped and self- addressed envelope.</i>	8.25% SALES TAX	
	TOTAL	
	CONTRIBUTION TO GGAS	
Pick up in Berkeley at the GGAS office	POSTAGE FOR HATS & T-SHIRTS	
	GRAND TOTAL	



Observations

by Hugh Cotter

May 20 to July 25

This extended column carries us from the latter part of spring migration, through the slower summer period and into the return of the first fall migrant shorebirds moving through our area.

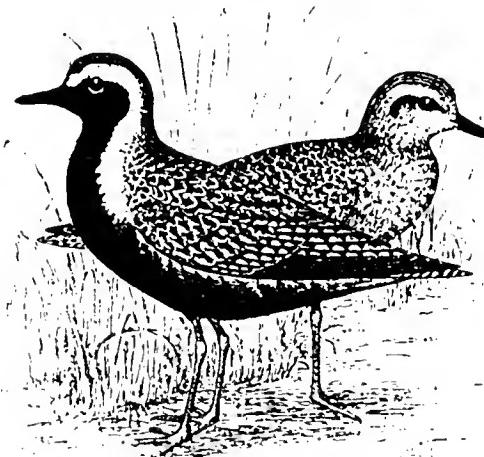
Although a "silent spring" was somewhat in evidence in many locations there were some good highlights to this period and a promising start to the fall migration can only increase our optimism for the impending season to come.

Albatrosses to Gulls

A number of Pelagic trips made it out to Cordell Banks and beyond this period. Some of the high counts included 135 Black-footed Albatross, June 14 (DN), two Laysan Albatross on June 21 (DN), a Flesh-footed Shearwater on June 28 (DLSH) and July 15 (DN). Seawatchers from shore recorded Black-vented Shearwaters from Point San Pedro, SM on June 1 (BS), and from Pescadero Beach, SM on July 16 (RST). Wilson's Storm Petrels were also at the Banks on July 13 (RS) and July 15 (DN). Little Blue Herons, typically a rare species away from its limited range in south San Francisco Bay, were found on June 17 at Bolinas Lagoon, MRN, (RS) with another again in Marin County at Tomales Bay from July 22 to present, (MOB)

An American Golden Plover was present at the Moonglow Dairy, MON on July 14 to 24 with another reported at the Salinas

River Wildlife Area, MON on July 24 (per MPRBA). A **Bar-tailed Godwit** found near Crescent City, DN, on June 30 remained at least through July 1 (GH), an encouraging start to this year's shorebird migration. Semipalmated Sandpipers were first reported at the Coyote Creek Riparian Station on July 6 with 3 birds present, (SR). As the month progressed Semipalmated Sandpipers were increasingly recorded with a total of 8 birds in San Mateo alone by July 29 (per RST, MOB) and a single at Abbott's Lagoon, PRNS,



MRN, on July 12 (DS). A **Curlew Sandpiper** was an exciting find at the Crittenden Marsh, SCL on July 23 (MR). This bird is thought to be possibly the same bird recorded at this location this past spring, (per JM) and remains as of this writing. The first report of Pectoral Sandpiper was from the Moonglow Dairy, Moss Landing, MON on July 24 (per MPRBA). A Ruff was present at Alviso, SCL on June 29 (SR).

South Polar Skuas were recorded on the afore mentioned trips to the Cordell Banks with a single bird on July 13 (RS) and 2

birds on July 15 (DN), while good numbers of Sabine's Gull were noted on most of these trips. Reports of Franklin's Gull included an adult bird, May 25 and 31 at Drakes Beach PRNS, (RJ, CC) and another which was observed flying past Pigeon Point, SM on June 1 (AE). An Arctic Tern returned again to summer at the Hayward Shoreline, being first recorded on June 17 and remaining as of this writing (KHi).

A Least Tern found at the Paicines Reservoir, SB on July 8 (DLSH) constitutes possibly the first county record for this species. Elegant Terns made an early comeback to our area with the first report coming from Pigeon Point, SM on May 20 (BS). Also interesting was a report of 650 birds at Brooks Island, CCC on June 24 (SG) the highest county count. Both Xantus and Craveri's Murres were found at the Cordell Banks on July 13 (RS) with Xantus again recorded on July 23 (DN).

An influx of Horned Puffin in our area was certainly one of the main highlights this period. The number of sightings is believed to have some relationship to the "El Nino" year we are experiencing. Birds were reported on May 25 at Laguna Point, Mc Kerricher SP, MEN, (SS), at Point Arena, MEN, on May 29 (DT) and on May 31 (ES), at Chimney Rock PRNS, MRN with up to 3 birds on June 7 at this location and one of which remains as of this writing. Another was seen on June 20 from the Cliffhouse in San Francisco, (ASH), the first city

Warbler sightings

Black & White Warbler

June 17 Muir Beach, MRN
July 6 (2), Muir Beach, MRN

RS
fide KH

Tennessee Warbler

May 26 BSOL, MON
May 31 El Granada, SM
June 1 Pilarcitos Creek,
Half Moon Bay, SM
June 3 Near Half Moon Bay, SM
June 18 (2), Pescadero, SM

per MPRBA
BS
RST
RST
RST

Northern Parula

May 31 San Bruno Mtn. CP, SM
June 8 Limantour, PRNS, MRN
June 9 (2) AMSP, MON
June 10-14 Fishdocks, PRNS
June 15 (2) SEFI
June 17 El Granada, SM
June 22 Fort Bragg, MEN

PJM
KH
per MPRBA
KH
PRBO
BS
JW

Magnolia Warbler

June 15 SEFI
June 17 Drakes Beach, PRNS, MRN
June 18 Fort Bragg, MEN

PRBO
JR
DT

Chestnut-sided Warbler

May 25 BSOL, MON
June 1 MP 56.34, Highway 1, SON
June 15 El Granada, SM
June 22/23 Fort Bragg, MEN

per MPRBA
BP
BS
JW

Prairie Warbler

July 12 Drakes Beach, PRNS

LW

Ovenbird

June 15 SEFI

PRBO

Northern Waterthrush

June 20 Gazos Creek Road, SM

RST

Hooded Warbler

June 8-10 Pescadero, SM
June 13 Crystal Springs Reservoir, SM
June 18 Caswell SP, SJ
June 18 Pescadero Creek Road, SM

RST
PJM
HR
PJM

Canada Warbler

June 14 SEFI

PRBO

American Redstart

May 26 San Gregorio, SM
June 8 Phipps Ranch, Pescadero, SM
onwards Total 4 birds, confirmed breeding.
June 9 Limantour, PRNS, MRN
fide KH Mist netted
June 11 (2) AMSP, MON per MPRBA
June 15 San Bruno Mtn CP, SM PJM
June 17 AMSP, MON per MPRBA
June 19 Berkeley Marina, ALA David Jaffe
June 21 Mt. Davidson, San Francisco JM
June 27 Pescadero BMCK
June 29 AMSP, MON per MPRBA

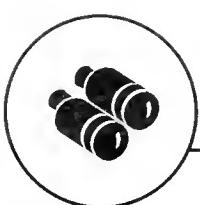
record. In addition 6 birds were picked up dead along a stretch of beach in PRNS, (RS) during the period, an incredible total of birds.

Cuckoos to Sparrows

Reports of Yellow-billed Cuckoos this year included birds at AMSP, MON on June 11 (per MPRBA) and another on the SEFI

on June 15 (PRBO). This species is typically extremely rare away from its limited breeding area in

Continued on page 10



Observations

Continued from page 9

our region, along the Sacramento River. Cassin's Kingbirds were confirmed breeding in Santa Clara, the first county breeding record, (SR). An additional stray bird was found at Point Reyes on May 23, only the third county record, (RS). An Eastern Kingbird

The monthly *Observation* column is generated from reports made to the Northern California Bird Box and Monterey Peninsula Rare Bird Alert, (MPRBA) or to the author. Some sightings are unconfirmed and numbers of birds are often best regarded as estimates or "best guesses". In general, birds in boldface are very rare in our region, geographically or seasonally. Many of these are currently reviewed by the California Bird Records Committee (CBRC). Observers are encouraged to provide written and/or photographic documentation to the CBRC, c/o Michael Patten, P.O. Box 51959, Riverside, CA 92517-2959 for any species currently on the review list. A list of review species can also be obtained from the CBRC secretary at the address above.

This data is made possible by all the observers who contributed their reports to the Northern California Bird Box and Monterey Peninsula Rare Bird Alert, (MPRBA).

If anybody has photos of birds reported in this column and would be interested in letting us post them on our web site we would be very appreciative. Please feel free to contact me to discuss.

Abbreviations for Observers: AB, Alan Barron; MB, Mike Bumgartner; GC, George Chaniot; TC, Tom Condit; CC, Chris Corbin; DD, David DeSante; AE, Al Eisner; CF, Carter Faust; SG, Steve Glover; KH, Keith Hansen; Ktli, Kevin Hints; GJ, Gjon Hazard; BH, Bill Hill; ASH, Alan Hopkins; DJ, David Jaffe; RJ, Ralph Jensen; BM, Bert McKee; DMCK, Dave McKenzie; PJM, Peter Metropolis; JM, Joe Morlan; DN, Dan Nelson; BP, Benjamin Parmeter; JD, JD Philips; JR, Jean Richmond; HR, Harold Reeves; WR, Will Richardson; MR, Mike Rogers; SR, Steve Rottenborn; BS, Barry Sauppe; DS, Doug Shaw; DLS, Debra Love Shearwater; SS, Stan Snyder; RS, Rich Stallcup; ES, Emilie Strauss; RST, Ron Thorn; DT, Dorothy Tobkin; JW, Jerry White; LW, Lee Woodson; JWr, Jay Wright.

Abbreviations for counties: ALA, Alameda; BUT, Butte; CC, Contra Costa; DNC, Del Norte County; HUM, Humboldt; MAD, Madera; MRN, Marin; MEN, Mendocino; MTY, Monterey; SF, San Francisco; SJ, San Joaquin; SM, San Mateo; SCL, Santa Clara; SON, Sonoma; STA, Stanislaus; TUL, Tulare; TUO, Tuolumne; YOL, Yolo.

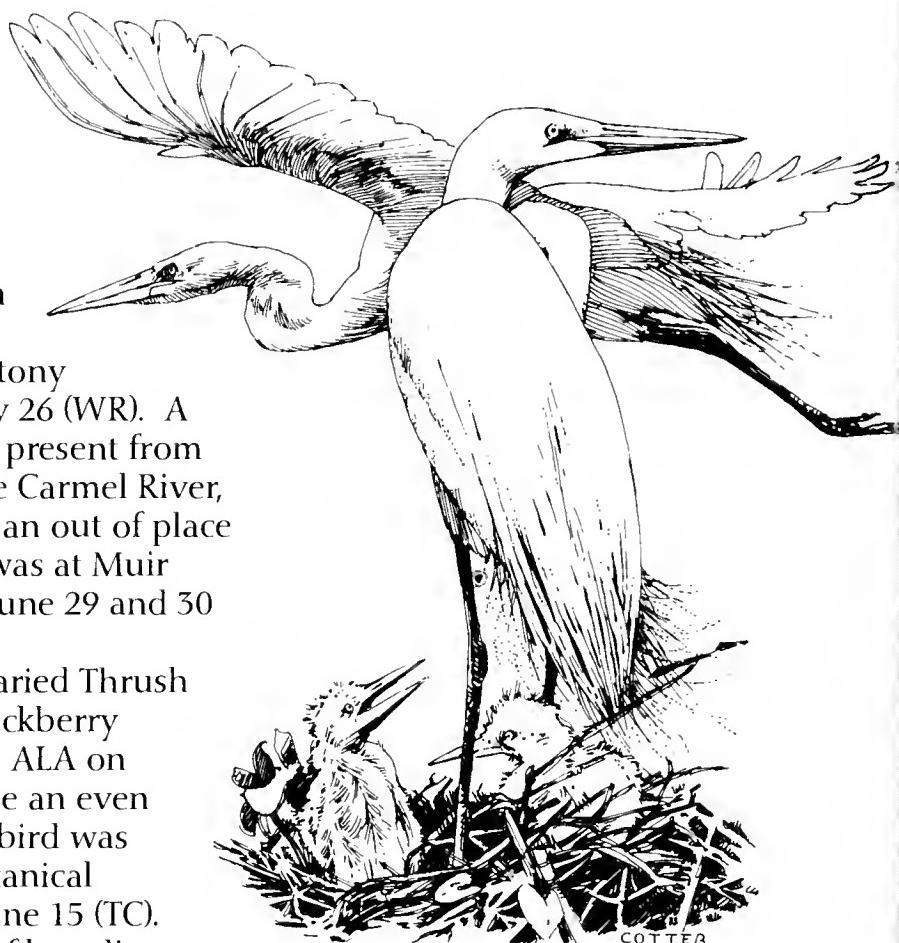
Other abbreviations used: AMSP, Andrew Molera State Park, Monterey; BSOL, Big Sur Ornithology Lab, MTY; CCRS, Coyote Creek Riparian Station; PRNS, Point Reyes National Seashore, Marin; SEFI, South East Farallon Islands, San Francisco; per MPRBA - per Monterey Peninsula Rare Bird Alert.

was present in Pescadero, SM on June 18 (PJM). An Eastern Phoebe was reported at Stony Fork, COL on May 26 (WR). A Gray Catbird was present from June 7 to 10 at the Carmel River, MON, (BH) while an out of place Brown Thrasher was at Muir Beach, MRN, on June 29 and 30 (DMCK).

Un-seasonal Varied Thrush were found at Blackberry Canyon, Berkeley, ALA on May 20 (MB) while an even more out of date bird was at Tilden Park Botanical Garden, CC, on June 15 (TC). The first records of breeding Hermit Thrush in Alameda County were also confirmed this period with the second record for Contra Costa, (SG).

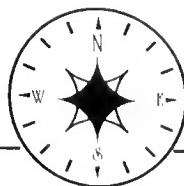
Another out of place species was a Mountain Bluebird at Pescadero, SM on June 15 (RST). Unusual vireos were represented by a report of a **White-eyed Vireo** found singing in Modesto, STAN on June 1 (HR). Red-eyed Vireo sightings included a bird in Golden Gate Park, SF on May 29 (ASH), another at Pescadero on June 15 (RST) with one also at the BSOL, MON on June 20 (per MPRBA)

With many traditional spots not recording their typical variety and number of eastern spring vagrant warblers, there were still some notable highlights this period including higher than usual numbers of American Redstarts including the first breeding record in San Mateo County, 4



Hooded Warbler sightings and a Canada Warbler on the SEFI. The details are in chart on previous page.

A Great-tailed Grackle was in Sierra Valley, NEV on June 4 (JWr). A Summer Tanager was present on June 20 at Inverness, MRN, (DD). Rose-breasted Grosbeaks proved somewhat numerous with a total of 11 birds reported San Mateo, Alameda, Mendocino and Monterey and Contra Costa counties, (Mob). Another wayward species this month was a report of Green-tailed Towhee at the Olema Marsh, MRN on July 7 (CF). A Le Contes Sparrow at Pacific Shores, DNC, first found May 23 (AB) and which remained at least through May 26 is one of very few records for our region



Field Trips

Announcing Regular Strybing Arboretum Field Trips

by Lillian Fuji

and even rarer still in Spring, a fitting end to this month's Observations

Correction

In the April Observations column we reported a Great-tailed Grackle in Yosemite Valley, April 6. The observer here was Scott Recilo. In addition it should be noted that Yosemite Valley is actually in Mariposa county and not Tuolumne.

While we do our utmost to ensure correct reports and credits to observers sometimes mistakes and omissions do occur. We will also do our best to correct these errors when they are pointed out to us.

Observation Volunteer still wanted:

This column will be my last one and we are still looking for someone who would be willing to carry on this wonderful task. It is an excellent way to gain knowledge of the birds in our region. Anybody who might be interested is encouraged to call our office.

It has certainly been a challenging task putting this column together, but an extremely rewarding one. To all those who I may have spelt their names incorrectly or not credited for their sightings, my apologize. To all those who continue to contribute to the Birdbox my thanks.

Allan Ridley, teacher, naturalist and long time GGAS member and field trip leader, will begin leading monthly bird walks through the Strybing Arboretum area of Golden Gate Park.

The Strybing Arboretum is a delightful section of Golden Gate Park, with several "micro-habitats" attracting a varied array of resident, migrant and vagrant birds. Allan's generous commitment of his time and knowledge is a product of his love for this precious natural resource (one of the City's few remaining), his desire to pass on his love for birds and his commitment to their conservation, and his regard for the many of you who have enthusiastically participated in his field trips in past years.

The first trip will be on October 5, with trips following on the first Sunday of the months of November, December and January. Please note however, that in addition to their volunteer activities, Allan and Helen McKenna Ridley are engaged in many other pursuits, including leading natural history trips to Costa Rica and beyond, and Allan teaches ornithology classes for the Strybing Arboretum Association. Scheduling conflicts may therefore occasionally arise, so always double check *The Gull* for Strybing Arboretum field trip dates.

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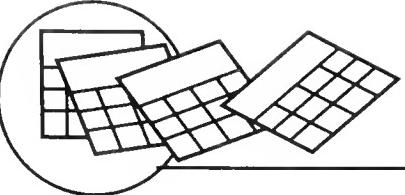
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George Homen in memory of George Curtis Miller

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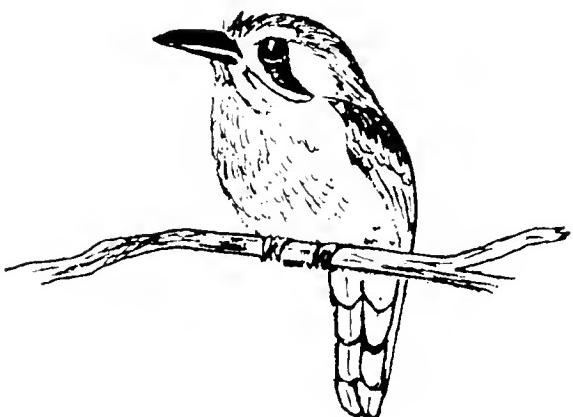
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September Meeting

Kids + Learning = Hope for the Environment

The first children's film by Emmy Award winning directors Judy Irving and Christopher Beaver shows how much fun it is to pitch in and restore the environment. Featuring multi-ethnic school children on field trips organized by Estuary Action Challenge, the film includes rare footage of endangered species such as the Clapper Rail and Peregrine Falcon, plus favorite animals like Sea Lions and Brown Pelicans. From the simple clean up of trash



Thursday, September 18

7:30 p.m.

Northbrae Community Church

941 The Alameda, Berkeley

to the planting of native plants, from island habitat restoration to the rescue and care of wild animals, children learn that they, too, can have a real impact on the natural world around them.

We hope to be joined by one of the film makers, who will also speak to us about the film's creation and its importance. Focusing on such a significant topic, the environmental education of youth, this program would be especially interesting to children and teachers. So if you fall into either category or know some one who does, bring them along.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

As a member of National Audubon Society, you are automatically enrolled in the local chapter, Golden Gate Audubon Society. Chapter benefits include receipt of *The Gull*, access to field trips and programs, and the opportunity to volunteer. Call the office if you have any questions.

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